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Resolution 1956-12-16 Amendment to Small Watershed Act (Public Law 566)

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

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Whereas, the number and size of water control projects being planned and built throughout the nation are rapidly increasing, with an ever more significant effect on wildlife resources, and

Whereas, engineering construction programs are being developed for whole river basins, and

Whereas, competition for land and water resources brought about by these construction programs and by expanding population, agriculture, and industry seriously threatens preservation of adequate wildlife habitat, and

Whereas, there is now evident the need for strengthening the Coordination Act to provide for full and equal partnership of the wildlife conservation measures in water-development programs in view of the expanding scale of water resources project construction, and

Whereas, the report of the Presidential Advisory Committee on Water Resources Policy, a top-level cabinet group, has recognized the need for more intensive biological studies of water resource development and greater consideration of fish and wildlife conservation in water resource development, and

Whereas, the bill, S. 2372, introduced by Senator John L. McClellan, of Arkansas, was a step in the right direction toward strengthening the Coordination Act, but failed of enactment in the 84th congress,

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners urges development by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the Department of the Interior of proposed legislation, based on 10 years of experience with the Coordination Act, to strengthen that Act and to bring the conservation of fish and wildlife resources to full equal partnership with water control for other purposes such as irrigation, flood control, hydro-electric power, and navigation, and

That members of the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners be supplied with copies of such proposed legislation by the Department of the Interior for comment and suggestions so that the states, as partners with the federal government, may have an appropriate voice in determining the content of the proposed legislation and in supporting the same during consideration of its enactment by the congress of the United States.

Be it further resolved that copies of this resolution be sent to the Secretary of the Interior and to the director of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service with the request for action consistent with the expressions given.

RESOLUTION NO. 12

AMENDMENT TO SMALL WATERSHED ACT (PUBLIC LAW 566)

Whereas, Public Law 1018, 84th congress, amended Public Law 566 by eliminating certain restrictive provisions, and

Whereas, the elimination of these restrictive provisions may result in still greater damage to wildlife resources in the midwest and Great Plains regions, and

Whereas, there is justification for putting restrictions on the type of work that can be done in the name of flood prevention such as drainage and clearing where the primary benefits accrue to the individual landowner by putting more land into cultivation, and

Whereas, in some areas the local sponsoring groups and organizations have shown little consideration for conservation of recreational and wildlife values in watershed planning,

Be it therefore resolved, that the International Association of Game, Fish and Conservation Commissioners, in convention assembled at Toronto, Ontario, on September 12, 13, and 14, 1956, urges the 85th congress to institute amendments to Public Law #566 which will curtail the destructive practices now planned in many projects and which will result in small watershed planning beneficial to all the people and to all interests. We sepcifically request that the amendments do the following:

1. In Section 4. (2), (b) define "works applicable to flood prevention," for which the Act provides that the federal government shall bear total costs of construction, in such a manner as to eliminate any drainage or other works which put new land into crop production or which are of primary benefit to the individual landowner.

2. In Section 5, require that all projects, regardless of the extent of federal cost sharing, which involve public lands or wildlife under the jurisdiction of the Secretary of the Interior be submitted to the secretary for review.